DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 282 568 IR 051 935

AUTHOR Phelan, Jody
TITLE A Librarian's Planning Handbook for the Texas Reading Club.
INSTITUTION Texas State Library, Austin. Dept. of Library Development.
PUB DATE 86
NOTE 51p.; For the 1987 program guide, see IR 051 936.
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Budgeting; Childrens Literature; Guidelines; *Library Planning; *Library Services; *Program Development; Program Evaluation; Publicity; *Public Libraries; *Reading Programs; Records (Forms); Recreational Reading; State Programs; Volunteers
IDENTIFIERS *Texas Reading Club

ABSTRACT

Developed for the Texas Reading Club, a program sponsored cooperatively by local libraries and the Texas State Library and designed to encourage children and their parents to read and use the library, this planning handbook is intended to help librarians and volunteers organize and manage a local reading club. The Texas Reading Club program is briefly described, and guidelines for organizing a reading program are provided under the following headings: (1) Why Plan? (2) Goals, Objectives, and Activities; (3) Program Activities; (4) Estimate What You Need (Books and Audiovisuals, People, Space/Facilities, Supplies and Equipment, and Budget); (5) Scheduling; (6) Participation; (7) Guidelines (Rules and Regulations, Registration, Contracts, and Recordkeeping); (8) Evaluation; and (9) Publicity. Brief bibliographies of books and journal articles on planning, program activities, and publicity are provided, and appendices include examples of reading club forms and a month-by-month listing of programming tasks. (KM)

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A Librarian's Planning Handbook for the TEXAS READING CLUB

by

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Texas State Library

1986

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TEXAS STATE LIBRARY CATALOGING IN PUBLICATION DATA

Phelan, Jody.
A librarian's planning handbook for the Texas reading club / by Jody Phelan. -- [Austin, Tex.] : Library Development Division, Texas State Library, 1986.
65 leaves : forms ; 28 cm.

Includes bibliographies.

1. Libraries, Children's--Handbooks, manuals, etc. 2. Children--Books and reading. I. Texas State Library. Library Development Division. II. Title. III. Title: Texas reading club.

Z1037 028.534 T3122

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The Texas Reading Club:
An Introduction

The Texas Reading Club, sponsored cooperatively by local libraries and the Texas State Library, is a program to encourage children and their parents to read and to use the library. The Reading Club offers a structured reading program and a variety of entertaining literature-related storyhours, puppet shows, films, and other attractive events.

The Texas State Library selects a theme each year and produces posters, bookmarks, reading logs, and certificates to publicize that theme. Local libraries develop the programs.

To inspire program ideas, the State Library publishes a PROGRAM GUIDE FOR THE TEXAS READING CLUB which suggests activities and crafts, books and audiovisuals appropriate for the year's theme.

To help librarians and volunteers organize and manage a reading club, the Texas State Library offers this planning handbook.

I

◆◆◆ Why Plan? ◆◆◆

**Today is the first day of registration for the reading club at your library. Children have begun to form a line in front of the desk in the children's area. Registration forms, guidelines for participation, schedules of events, and extra library card application forms are in ready for this day. You place yourself behind the desk in anticipation.

The first child in the line asks, "I'm visiting my grandmother this summer and want to belong to the reading club. Can I have a library card? I live in Seattle."

The mother of the second child in line wants to know if she must stay with her four children during the storyhour programs. She'd really like to do her grocery shopping during that time since the store is only a few blocks away.

"May I bring my day care center of twenty-five children to the programs?" asks the next lady in line.

"Do I have to read library books to be a member of this reading club?" asks a child.**

This scene represents only a very few questions and inquiries you will receive about your reading club and programming activities. Parents and children alike will want to know the guidelines and parameters of participation in your library programs. Questions will begin to be asked of you and your staff as soon as the first piece of publicity is distributed throughout your community.

How can you prepare yourself for this? One answer to this difficult question is to PLAN. Prepare yourself for the reading club program by planning every detail in advance. Begin this process early enough in the spring or fall of the previous year to ensure that you will be ready for the summer activities the day publicity begins.

This advance planning will assist you in feeling confident in your programming talents and it will build confidence in your patrons who will be participating in the programs. Planning results in a positive image for your library and acts as a great public relations tool. Making decisions which might affect library policy and will involve your library board or city/county approval must be completed well in advance of actual programming. Budget needs determined early in advance will allow you sufficient time to set aside and/or solicit appropriate funding. Individuals who will be presenting programs will appreciate knowing well in advance the day, time, and subject of their program. You will be able to address last minute details and problems without concerning yourself with basic planning activities during a time when your library is probably at its busiest.

The library planner who can address with ease the questions posed in the scenario presented above is the one who has taken the time to consider carefully the reading club and its associated activities. These include:

(1) How long will the reading club last?

(2) Who will be eligible to participate in the reading club?

(3) What guidelines will be established to ensure a smooth operation?

(4) Will storyhours be offered? When? Who will present them? What age group will be the target audience? Will separate programs be planned for pre-schoolers?

(5) Where will the programs be held?

(6) Who will help with these reading club activities? Staff? Volunteers? How will we use their talents?

(7) How much money will we need?

(8) How will we keep records of these activities? What records do we need to keep?

(9) How will we publicize the programs and reading club?

(10) Why are we participating in this program? What do we hope to achieve?

This manual has been designed to assist you in answering these questions. It will provide you with suggestions for accomplishing specific phases of the planning and execution of a successful reading club. It is divided into sections which address these phases. By following the process as outlined here you will be able to plan and implement a logically organized and carefully thought out series of programs for your library. Lists of books and journal articles are strategically placed throughout the manual to provide you with additional sources of information.

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Morrow, Paula. "'Library Treasure': A Summer Reading Program." Top of the News 41(Winter 1985): 169-176.

Moxom, P. and S. Patron. "The Art of Programming: How to Do It Right If You're Broke, Understaffed, and Can't Draw a Straight Line." Illinois Libraries 67 (January 1985): 39-41. (Entire issue devoted to children's programming.)

Robotham, John S. and Lydia LaFleur. Library Programs: How to Select, Plan, and Produce Them. Metuchen, New Jersey: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1976.

II

Goals, Objectives, and Activities

Goals are employed by librarians to identify the direction which a single project or the total libary program will take. They are broad and unmeasurable statements of purpose, and are the yardsticks by which you can evaluate the success of your program. They need not be complicated, or overambitious. They should be realistic and useful.

Objectives offer further identification and explanation of goals. They include time frames and the achievement of them is measurable. Each goal should be accompanied by at least one objective--some goals may require many objectives.

"Activities", sometimes called strategies, are those actions taken to fulfill the requirements of a specific objective. An "activity" is simply a list of what is to be done, by when, and how.

An example of a goal with accompanying objectives and activities applicable to the reading club is provided below:

GOAL:

To increase community participation in the reading club.

OBJECTIVE:

To visit all community elementary schools in order to publicize the reading club and programs.

ACTIVITIES:

Contact appropriate school distict officials to determine district procedures for visiting schools.
Deadline: February 15.

Within the context of school district established guidelines; determine method of presentation and possible distribution of written material.
Deadline: March 1.

Design and print materials for distribution.
Deadline: April 20.

Contact individual schools and schedule visitations.
Deadline: April 20.

Assign staff and/or volunteers/friends to offer library presentations at specific schools.
Deadline: April 20.

Write script for school presentations.
Deadline: April 20.

Final meeting with school-visit presentors.
Deadline: May 1.

Visits: May 15, 16, 17, 18.

Using goals and objectives is a good way to structure the path which your reading club will take. It is the first part of the planning process for any library program or project.

III

◆◆◆ Program Activities ◆◆◆

The Texas State Library PROGRAM GUIDE FOR THE TEXAS READING CLUB will suggest activities and crafts for this year's theme. You may plan your entire program using the GUIDE'S suggestions and instructions. If you want to create your own programs, here is a list of possible activities with a bibliography which describes even more.

- Story readings
- Film showings
- Parades
- Pet shows
- Book talks
- Arts and crafts projects
- Sing-alongs
- Finger plays
- Felt board stories
- Puppet shows
- Visits from area professionals to discuss job-related activities
- Concerts of area music groups or recitals
- Dramatic presentations of area theater/drama groups
- Visits from individuals who are sharing/teaching a skill or art
- No-heat cooking classes
- Costume parties
- Birthday parties (area residents or famous people)
- Storytelling
- Contests of all kinds
- Travel programs

- Visits from area institutions (museum of natural history, zoo, animal control, art museum, etc.)

- Games/events (with games everyone can play and no "winner" is evident)

For each activity you decide to do, list space, equipment, supplies, library materials, people and the amount of time you will need to accomplish the activity.

If you are going to do the craft or lead the story, practice doing it before you meet with the children. If someone else is going to present the program for you, do the following:

Be sure that the presentor is advised of the date, time, and place of the program well in advance of the event.

Be specific about the presentor's topic, responsibilities, time availability, and renumeration.

To the best of your ability, advise the presentor of the approximate number and age level of attendees.

Learn of any special presentor requirements (ex: overhead projector, table, supplies, etc.).

Telephone presentor two weeks, and again one week, prior to the event to determine if he/she has any last minute questions or requirements. (This will also serve to remind presentor of upcoming program.)

Ensure that a library staff member or volunteer is available to assist presentor with set up or to handle any last minute "surprises" the day of the program.

A staff member or volunteer should also be available at the end of the program to assist in clean up.

The presentor should be introduced to the audience by a staff member or volunteer.

The presentor should be consulted if the program is to be covered by the local media.

Appropriate tokens of appreciation, whether a thank you note and/or a small gift, should always be given presentors.

ALWAYS have an alternate program ready "just in case" a real emergency arises and the presentor cannot carry through with the planned program.

See Appendix A for a program checklist.

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Glazer, Tom. Do Your Ears Hang Low? New York: Doubleday, 1980. (Words, music, and fingerplays to fifty songs.)

Mallett, Jerry J. Library Skills Activities Kit: Puzzles, Games, Bulletin Boards, and Other Interest-Rousers for the Elementary School Library. West Nyack, New York: The Center for Applied Research in Education, Inc., 1981. (Applicable to public libraries too.)

Hunt, Tamara. Pocketful of Puppets: Never Pick a Python for a Pet and Other Animal Poems. Nancy Renfro Studios, 1985. (Animal poems and story-related puppet activities, including photocopiable puppet patterns.)

Marshall, Karen K. Back to Books: 200 Library Activities to Encourage Reading. Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland & Company, Inc., 1983.

Robinson, Jeri. Activities for Anyone, Anytime, Anywhere. Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1983. (Ideas to supplement reading activities.)

IV

Estimate What You Need

When you know your goals for the program, when you know what activities you want to do, you can list what you will need to accomplish all you want to do. The first step, especially if you are new to the reading club, is to discover what you have.

An early objective evaluation of existing library resources is essential in order to determine the degree to which currently available materials can support the programs you would like to offer. Consideration should be given to all phases of your library program: collection strengths and weaknesses, space availability, financial and human support, and the ability to borrow necessary items from local schools, other city/county departments, area libraries, or your system office. This self-examination process should result in a list of available resources for summer programming. To some extent availability, especially if there is no cost or the cost is minimal, may dictate content and scheduling. It should not, however, prevent you from trying new ideas, contacting new sources of support, or providing the youth of your community with attractive and exciting "happenings."

Books and Audiovisuals

An evaluation of your library's "resources" should include materials used to support and publicize patron services as well as the books, audio and video tapes, records, toys, and cassettes you make available to them through borrowing privileges or in-house enjoyment. Do not overlook the bookmarks, puppets and puppet show scripts, posters, mobiles, and exhibits from years past. Choose the ones which can be used to enhance this year's events and pull them out of storage.

Remember that increased use of the library during the summer months uses a multitude of library and office supplies. Stock up on such items as library registration forms and cards, book cards, book tape, audiovisual containers, date due cards, jacket covers, pencils, library stationery, staples and other items whose supply might be depleted due to increased use.

Use the bibliography from A PROGRAMMING GUDE FOR THE TEXAS READING CLUB to see how much material you have related to the year's theme. If you do not have enough, try doing one of the following before you purchase new material.

- Arrange to borrow audiovisual materials through your regional library system.
- Make a wish list - a list of books you would like to buy and send it to your Friends and local businesses and ask them if they would like to donate one book for the reading club.

- Talk to your school librarians. They may have books on the theme which you could borrow for the summer.

Exercise care to develop a well-rounded collection specifically designed to meet the growing demands of the citizens of your community. Remember that patron needs is your primary consideration. Avoid adding items to your collection merely to meet the need of a summer reading program themes. Keep in mind that the materials you buy for this summer will remain in your collection for months and years to come.

Examine the physical condition of those materials which will receive increased use during the summer months. Check book spines, torn pages, book cards, and book jackets. Make repairs prior to the series of programs to ensure collection durability throughout the summer and to avoid collection depletion due to needed repairs. Order duplicates and replacements early enough to ensure their inclusion in the collection for the summer. Reading programs are so terribly hectic that attention to these details in the early spring can save time and distraction during the reading club months.

People

The people you need to assist you in planning and executing your reading club program include individuals who agree to present programs to participants, volunteers who serve in any one of a hundred ways, and staff members who possess a unique understanding and appreciation of library rules and regulations. Evaluate each group of "helpers" and determine the mose efficient use of their knowledge and skills.

Community Resources

Begin by conducting a detailed evaluation of the human resources available in your community upon which you can draw for support during your programming effort. You are already aware of local individuals and organizations which might be potential participants in your programming effort. Even if you have never formalized your attempt to identify these resources, you are certainly aware of their existence. A formal record of them for this summer's reading club program will be useful to you for future programming.

Make a file. This one, if compiled properly, will pay for itself time and time again as you continue to plan library programs for years to come. Call it a COMMUNITY RESOURCE FILE and include a variety of individuals/organizations in your community who represent potential program presentors. Design a form. (See Appendix A for an example.) Arrange forms in a file by subject area. Subjects to include are: arts and crafts, science, music, storytelling, drama, professional expertise (fire safety personnel, etc.), and puppetry, to name a few. This file will come in handy during fund raising projects and Friends' membership drives.

Collect names for this file from as many sources as possible throughout the year. How to start? Begin this minute by writing down the name of one person who has a skill which might be or has been utilized by the library for programming. Add to the name the individual's address, phone number, and

special skill(s). Additional information, if known, which will be useful include: Does this individual work, and if so, what are his/her hours? Is he/she available during the summer? If this person has presented programs for the library in the past, was he/she dependable, prompt, enjoyable? Does this presentor require special set-up? Charge a fee? Limit attendance? These questions should be addressed for each addition to your file.

Records for area organizations will include slightly different information. A sample form can be found in Appendix A.

Where to find names for the file? Keep your eyes and ears open. Read area newspapers, and remember that people from surroung communities are potential program presentors also. Write down the name of every patron who indicates an interest in offering a program--and train staff and volunteers to do the same. Read newsletters of area social and professional organizations, churches, scout and athletic groups, and the Chamber of Commerce. Circulate file forms at every meeting you attend--from city/county staff meetings to bridge club events or choir practice. Almost every person has a hobby or special skill, and many are willing to share their knowledge. Ask them to complete the forms and return to you. Before long you will have assembled forms representing an interesting collection of area residents. And, please, remember senior citizens, children, teenagers, and college students. From star gazing to genealogy research, you will be surprised at the wealth of expertise in your community.

Train family and friends to assist you in this endeavor. They come into contact with people every day and you may be overlooking someone with whom they work or play. Before long your community resource file will begin to grow and grow, and what a store of resources you will have collected.

To get you started, consider including the following:

(1) All library staff;

(2) Friends of the Library;

(3) Volunteers;

(4) Regular library users with whom you and your staff are familiar;

(5) City/county personnel (fire fighters, parks and recreation staff, etc.);

(6) School librarians and teachers who might provide or assist in summer programs;

(7) Retired librarians and teachers;

(8) Library school students interested in practical experience prior to graduation;

(9) Members of youth organizations with community service requirements;

(10) Area artists and musicians of all ages; and

(11) Members of organizations with community service projects (garden clubs, Lions Clubs, senior citizen groups, professional associations).

Add to the list as you learn of individuals and/or organizations which you might approach for assistance. Include those individuals/organizations which have refused to participate in your programming effort. In this way, you and your successor will not continue to ask someone who is not interested in assisting the library.

Note the form provided in this handbook provides space to record the date, time, and type of program each has already presented. A record of past performance will assist you in refraining from requesting too much assistance from any one individual and/or organization.

The value of this file rests on how current it is. Continuous updating is imperative and will prevent frustration and embarrassment. Take the time and effort required to make it a viable and usable tool for programming.

◂▸ Volunteers ◂▸

The men and women who serve as volunteers in your public library play a dual role. Not only do they donate a significant number of hours of their own personal time to your organization, but they serve as library ambassadors of goodwill by discussing their volunteer activities with family and friends. They broaden your base of support by their actions and their words and they represent a significant and invaluable source of publicity and public relations. Some public libraries could not keep their doors open if it were not for the help of these angels, and others could not offer such a wide range of services without them.

As you plan your series of programs keep in mind the special skills that your volunteers bring to your program. When total recall is not possible, include in your record of each volunteer individual interests, hobbies, or skills which will be useful in library programming. (A sample volunteer record is provided in Appendix A.) An analysis of these records during the planning phase will offer you ideas for program presentors as well as program topics.

Advise all volunteers who will meet the public during the summer of the rules and regulations associated with the reading club and summer programs. Accomplish this by conducting a meeting at which rules/regulations, schedules, and presentors are discussed and/or by distributing this same information in written form to all who will be working in the library during the summer. Additionally, include the information in the Friends' newsletter if one exists. Keeping volunteers advised of library services and programs gives them confidence in dealing with patrons and also represents another vehicle for publicizing summer programs.

Volunteers can participate in the reading club program in a variety of ways. They can:

(1) register reading club members;

(2) serve as program presentors;

(3) prepare space for programs;

(4) clean space following programs;

(5) introduce presentors to audience;

(6) provide and/or serve refreshments;

(7) direct and/or work on publicity campaign;

(8) solicit donations of money and/or goods;

(9) communicate with presentors prior to, during, and following programs;

(10) coordinate summer activities;

(11) provide art work for activities; and

(12) compose media announcements of library activities.

Exercise care when you assign individual volunteers to specific activities. Primary considerations are skills, interests, time, and dependability. Letters of understanding to each volunteer who has agreed to accept a specific responsibility for a function and/or activity will solidify the agreement as well as remind the volunteer of the degree to which you depend on his/her assistance. You and your staff must, however, be prepared to accept the responsibility of those who are less dependable than we would like, or those who genuinely cannot provide the assistance they promised.

Take the time to let volunteers know how important their assistance is during the series of programs. Periodic verbal commendations as well as a celebration in their honor at the end of the program will reinforce your appreciation of their time and talents.

You will discover that employing volunteer assistance in your library program is a time-consuming activity. It requires individualized personal attention, task training, notes/letters of appreciation, maintenance of volunteer records, scheduling volunteer work, and communitywide acknowledgement of their assistance. The benefits are derived from the breadth of knowledge and skills added to the library program as a result of their contributions.

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Culberson, L.J. "Library Volunteers." Unabashed Librarian 1983 (no 49): 3-5. (Training and Task Assignments)

Roy, L. "Volunteers in Public Libraries: Issues and Viewpoints." Public Library Quarterly. 5 (Winter 1984): 29-40.

Warner, A.S. Volunteers in Libraries. Library Journal, 1983.

◆ Staff ◆

The number of library staff who will assist you in your programming effort will, in large part, be determined by the size of your library and the size of its personnel. Small libraries will engage the assistance of the entire population of staff and volunteers available, while larger libraries will have staff specifically assigned to participate or assist in the reading programs. Regardless of the size of your library or the degree to which you are engaged in activities for children in your community, it is important that you inform all those who will be working with children's programming for the summer of all aspects of the activities.

Advise everyone, including volunteers and program presentors involved in providing programs, of the times, dates, locations, rules and regulations, and subject content of all programs. Accomplish this by discussing program details in a meeting prior to the first program of the summer or as the publicity campaign is launched. Supplement this meeting with a sheet of useful data distributed to meeting participants and/or left at the circulation desk and at every telephone station in the library. Include on this sheet basic information which anyone can use while answering questions on the telephone or in person. Specific detailed questions can be directed to those working closely with the programs. Do not let any patron leave the library with an unanswered question regarding the reading club and summer programs. Make sure that the moment program publicity begins that all staff and volunteers can answer questions or direct patrons in a confident way to someone who can.

Assign staff specific responsibilities during the planning and/or implementation phases. Treat staff and volunteers who serve as program presentors with the same courtesy afforded any other presentor. Keep in mind the particular interests and skills of specific staff members. Above all, provide staff with clear instructions and adhere to times, dates, and guidelines. The least amount of frustration among staff regarding who is to be where, when, and for what reason, the greater the probability of a smooth operation.

◆◆ Space/Facilities ◆◆

Appropriate locations for reading club programming activities include the library as well as other "areas" throughout the community. Consider parks, community or recreation centers, churches, schools, parking lots, or fire

Space for summer programs also means finding sufficient work areas for recordkeeping activities. Designate some place in the library where paper work and distributed materials can be kept throughout the summer. In this way, staff and volunteers will be able to share the responsibility of maintaining accurate and consistent records.

Examine your library for space to place displays, bulletin boards, mobiles, announcements, and reading club members' progress. Some library planners devote entire bulletin boards or walls to the progress of reading club members. Displays and exhibits which supplement the reading club theme must be located in a secure place in the library. Announcements regarding program days and times must be posted strategically throughout the library and community in areas which receive significant patron/resident traffic. Identify and select these places early in the process and you will not be forced to make hurried decisions at a later date.

Supplies and Equipment

The types of activities you choose to present will dictate the equipment and supply needs of your programming effort. On the other hand, the equipment and supplies already available to you will, to some extent, influence the activities you will plan. In either case, identify equipment and supply needs at the same time that you plan and schedule programs. Make arrangements to schedule and/or purchase/lease those items you need early in the planning phase.

Check with local organizations in your community that might be willing to loan equipment to the library. They include:

- Churches
- Schools (public and private)
- Other city/county departments
- Social/professional clubs
- Theater groups
- Cable station
- Arts groups

Identify supply needs early in the planning phase and make arrangements to ensure that appropriate supplies are available in sufficient numbers at the right place and time. Collect such items from the cache of library and/or other city/county departments, or solicit donations of money and/or products from area clubs and businesses. Consider alternative plans in case such donations are not forthcoming.

Organize your effort to ensure the availability of equipment and supplies. Early detection will afford you the opportunity to redesign activities.

stations. Regardless of the location of the space you propose to use for specific programs, you must address the following questions:

(1) Is the space available for library use?

(2) Must special permission be obtained in order to use the space? From whom?

(3) When is the space available? Days? Time? Length of time?

(4) How many people will the space accommodate: What are the fire regulations regarding the number of persons allowed in the space at one time?

(5) Is there a charge to use the space? How much is it? Is it worth the cost? If a charge is levied, what are the alternatives? Will the organization donate the space? Can the Friends pay for the use of the space?

(6) Is any equipment available at the space site? Film projector? Tables and chairs? Slide projector? Chalk board?

(7) What limitations does the space present? Electrical outlet? Restrooms? Water? Size? Distance from library?

(8) What conditions will the sponsoring organization place on the use of the space? Set up? Clean up? No food? Day and/or time of day? Number of paPAQ (ticipants?

(9) What are the legal considerations? If not using city/county library space, is the city/county liable for injury to attending patron or staff? Is sponsoring organization appropriate one to provide space for library use?

(10) Is use of local police necessary? Must a permit be obtained for outdoor activities (i.e., parade)?

(11) Must a representative of the sponsoring organization be available at the space site or present at the program? Does this requirement, if it does exist, present a problem?

Complete arrangements for the use of library and/or community space early in the planning phase. Location often dictates size of audience, types of activities, and length of program.

Communicate with the site sponsor at least twice. A simple letter of understanding at the time of arrangement and a reminder two weeks prior to the event will help to avoid misunderstandings and surprises. This is especially true if you will be scheduling programs in a library room that is used for a variety of meetings and programs. Schedule your activities through appropriate channels and in a timely fashion and you will save embarrassment and/or problems later.

Budget

The process of budget preparation for any program includes:

(1) determining needs;

(2) identifying costs; and

(3) soliciting and/or collecting funds.

In more detail, implement your budget for the reading club program in the following manner:

(1) Outline as many program ideas as possible. Include ideas you consider too costly, time-consuming, and/or space prohibitive. Expand your horizons. Keep your adult patrons impressed and the children enthusiastic. Adults are often the motivators for youth attendance at library programs.

(2) Identify costs for each program ideas. Be realistic and collect "real" costs, not merely guesses. Use your telephone to identify presentor availability and determine those costs.

(3) Determine which programs, or parts of programs, can be presented with no cost to the library. Solicit support from area businesses, Friends, volunteers, family, and virtually anyone who might be willing to donate time, materials, or money.

(4) Determine remaining cost to the library for programs or parts of programs.

(5) Determine if you have sufficient funds to support the remaining program ideas.

(6) Discard ideas which appear to be prohibitive due to space, budget, or scheduling restrictions.

(7) List costs with accompanying sources of support for each remaining program. Include items which represent no cost to the library as well as ones with accompanying costs.

(8) Design a preliminary budget which represents real costs to the library for all items associated with your reading club programming effort.

Give careful attention to the total financial process, from determining program costs to maintaining accurate records throughout the series. Thoughtful and detailed budget preparation will reap rewards as the program progresses.

Consider control of the programming budget as two separate activities: as a subset of the total library budget and/or as a planning tool for future programming efforts. The degree of detail you decide to keep will be determined by the amount of money available for your program and your reason for keeping such records. Some library planners keep close control of how much is spent and in what areas/activities to ensure accountability and to assist them in short and long range planning.

Determine at the outset which activities will be underwritten by local businesses, organizations, Friends, or volunteers. Assign dollar values to these donations in order to be able to tabulate the total programming budget. Include the cost of time donated to the programs by volunteers and program presentors.

Estimate cost per program, including that of individual activities within programs. Make provision for emergency items or unforeseen expenses. Record individual activity/program costs for future reference and include the following:

(1) Presentor fee or gift;

(2) Rental of equipment, audiovisual hardware or software, space, or presentor requested item(s);

(3) Supplies, arts and crafts items, or "goodies" to take home;

(4) Refreshments;

(5) Cost of rights to show copyrighted video (or other copyrighted material);

(6) Publicity (in-house as well as communitywide campaign) for individual activity;

(7) Additional staff required to assist with a program (not to include volunteer time);

(8) Stationery, stamps, etc.;

(9) Overhead costs if held at a time when the library is not ordinarily open to the public;

(10) Additional insurance costs; and

(11) Miscellaneous.

Also identify and include in the total programming budget those costs which will be incurred during the course of the programming series, but which cannot be assigned to any one specific program. Examples are:

(1) Visits to schools to publicize summer events;

(2) Additional staff for the entire programming;

(3) Additions to the library collection as a result of the programming effort;

(4) Equipment, audiovisual hardware or software, or supplies purchased/rented for use during the summer;

(5) Production of posters, bookmarks, and other publicity items announcing summer events/programs; and

(6) Extra stationery, stamps, ect. to support additional correspondence.

Record cost for specific programs in addition to the total summer series of events. In this way you will be able to assign costs to future programming ideas in a much more effective manner. Forms to assist you in this endeavor can be found in Appendix A of this manual.

V

Scheduling

The success of your reading programs may depend upon the time of day and day of week in which they are offered. Your community may provide many activities for children which may compete with the reading club.

As you schedule your programs, consider the following:

(1) Vacation church schools schedules;

(2) Presentor requirements;

(3) School vacation dates;

(4) Camp (YMCA/YWCA, scout, sport, and now computer!) dates;

(5) Programs of other city/county departments (particularly parks and recreation events);

(6) Lifestyle of area residents; and

(7) Events/programs of other area organizations.

Contact other area organizations during the planning stage to determine their schedule of events. In this way a communitywide effort to provide positive activities for area youth can be coordinated.

Summer scheduling involves setting reading club dates and identifying days and times for program events. Take into account all of the above as well as staff vacation plans, participant attention spans, and the ability of your staff and volunteers to endure the hectic pace before you assign reading club dates and determine the length of time allocated for the total series. Considering all of these elements, most public libraries sponsor a six to eight week reading club with programs scheduled once or twice each week throughout that time period.

A number of decisions must be made regarding the scheduling of summer programs associated with the reading club. Make decisions concerning:

(1) The number of programs each week;

(2) Whether to offer one program for all participants, or, one for younger and another for older participants, and time/day decisions for each series;

(3) Day and time, and whether or not all programs will be scheduled on the same day at the same time each week;

(4) Length of each event; and

(5) Adult offerings scheduled at the same time for waiting parents/guardians.

VI

Participation

The first decision to make regarding the reading club and its associated activities is "Who is eligible to participate in our summer programs?". On the surface this question appears to be obvious, if not alarmingly easy, to address. However, eligibility decisions include the following:

(1) Will children of all ages/grades be accepted?

(2) Can pre-readers join (and count books that parents and/or guardians and/or older brothers or sisters read to them)?

(3) Can children who do not live in your service area join?

(4) Can children join who are visiting relatives or friends who live in your community? If so, who will be responsible for the materials they borrow?

Policy decisions regarding participation must be made well in advance of the publicity campaign for the summer programs. Approval from your library board and/or city/county supervisors must be obtained early in the spring. You must be prepared to support in writing specific decisions concerning participation in library programs/activities. In this way all participants/patrons will be advised of the fairness with which library programs are planned.

VII

Guidelines

Rules and Regulations

Regardless of the format and philosophy of reading clubs adopted by you and your library, you will have to make certain operational decisions to ensure smooth operation and fair practice. The degree to which rules are adopted will, to a large extent, depend on the staff/volunteer time available to deal with a structured system as well as past experience with the readers in your community. Remember also to publicize club rules and regulations and make them availabe to all members. More importantly, be prepared to abide by them once they have been finalized.

Consider establishing rules/regulations or guidelines for the following areas: (See Appendix A for an example.)

(1) Eligibility of participants;

(2) Registration dates;

(3) Acceptable materials (only books? book/cassette kits? books on cassettes?);

(4) Acceptability of non-library materials;

(5) Process of reporting materials read (This process varies greatly from library to library, and ranges from readers submitting lists of materials read, to verbal or written reports given to library staff/volunteers for each item read.);

(6) Dates of reading club (Widely publicize the last day that library staff/volunteers will accept reports/lists of materials read.).

It is also prudent at this time to review the rules or guidelines you have established for attendance at storyhours, film showings, and other library programs. Address the following concerns:

(1) Who can attend? Age limit? Day care centers and other groups of children?

(2) At what age must a parent or guardian remain in the library or the program room with a child?

(3) Will problem children be disciplined? How?

(4) How will compliance with fire regulations regarding number of participants in the space be handled?

(5) Will a charge be levied for programs where craft or other items are required and/or will be taken home by participants?

Limit rules and regulations to only those which are necessary to ensure a smooth operation. Too many restrictions will stifle creativity and force staff/volunteers to spend a great deal of time learning them and remembering to enforce them.

◆◆ Registration ◆◆

Registration involves ensuring that everyone who is reading for credit or a certificate is in your reading club membership file, and allows you to gauge the use of your programby identifying the number of participants. It will also help you determine the number of readers who drop out of the program before it is over. Finally, it provides you with useful statistics for next year's budget process and will assist you in determining the effectiveness and usefullness of such a program in your community.

Registration forms vary according to format and the information you require of participants. A sample form is provided for you in Appendix A.

The information on this form probably appears on the participant's library registration form, but obtaining it again for the reading club will save searching library records for information later. It will also provide you with new addresses or name changes of specific library patrons. Collect only enough information to satisfy the needs of your local library and the individual planning the programs.

Take the opportunity during the reading club registration period to issue participants and their families library cards if they do not have them. By doing this you will not only boost the number of library card holders, but you will be sure to have records for individuals who will probably be borrowing a significant number of library materials in a six to eight week period. Inform potential participants of general guidelines regarding the use of the library and its materials and the various services available to patrons.

Identify dates for reading club registration and adhere to them. Publicize dates in all materials describing the reading club, including in-house announcements as well as articles in the local media. A period of one week, or possibly two, is ordinarily adopted by library planners. Decide whether or not you will register participants after the designated registration period and adhere to that decision.

Contracts

Reading is a reward in itself: it is not a means to other superficial ends -like trophies or pizza. The reward for reading is qualitative rather than quantitative. There may be much more in 10 good books read carefully than in 100 beginning books read for speed. For these reasons the State Library recommends awarding official reading club certificates to all reading club participants who follow the rules. The library may say "To join the reading club you agree to read 10 books this summer." Or, the library may ask each child how many books the child wants to read and make a contract with the child for that number. Children who fulfill the contract receive a certificate.

Prizes may be appropriate as rewards for children who solve special quizzes or participate in contests or games sponsored by community organizations during the Reading Club.

Record Keeping

Maintain only those records which are required by your funding agency, the Texas State Library, and your own need to appraise your programs/services for future planning. Make the process of collecting data and keeping records simple for everyone who will be working with the summer programs, and ensure that everyone involved has been instructed in the appropriate method of collecting data and the exact way in which to record them. Avoid designing new record keeping devises and processes only for the reading club programs; coordinate new procedures with ones already used by your staff and volunteers.

Record/file maintenance for summer programming is divided into two separate activities: those associated with the reading club and those recording the results of programs offered. Take the time this year to design forms which can be used in years to come to collect necessary data.

Record for the reading club the name of each child who becomes a member of the reading club as well as an indication of the number of books each has read. The registration form discussed earlier in this manual serves as the record for each child and on that form space can be reserved for noting the number of books read. See the form as it appears in Appendix A.

Reporting books read by reading club members is a process which varies with the number of libraries with reading clubs. Some require participants to submit written or verbal reports of each book read. Others collect lists of completed books submitted by the reader to the library staff at the end of the reading period. Some want readers to maintain progress reports throughout the summer while others accept submitted lists or reports only during the last week of the program.

Determine early in the planning stage the importance of maintaining for each child the number of books read. Keep only those records necessary to fulfill the requirements of your program. Making notations on the child's reading club registration form is the easiest method of recording reading progress, and collecting this information throughout the reading period will relieve staff/volunteers for other activities during the last week of summer programs.

Complete a program report for each program sponsored by the library regardless of the length of the program or the activities planned. These reports will aid you in monitoring past programming efforts and will provide a record of activity for your successor or a new library board or city council member. You will also be able to use collected data as you prepare your next annual report to your library board and the Texas State Library, or when any city/county official questions you regarding your request for increased funding during next year's budgeting process.

VIII

◆◆◆ Evaluation ◆◆◆

Another type of record associated with a programming effort is that of participant evaluation, i.e., allowing those who attend your programs to react to them. Make the decision to collect evaluative data as a reult of a specific need to know. To design, distribute, collect, and analyze participant reaction to library programming efforts is time-consuming and frustrating, and only if a specific use will be made of the results is the process worthwhile.

If you decide to engage in program evaluation, you must consider the following:

(1) When to collect data (at the conclusion of each program, at the end of the series, at the conclusion of every third program, twice during the series, etc.);

(2) How to collect data (personal interview, mail survey, questionnaire distributed at the end of specific events, etc.);

(3) Who will provide data (children participants only, adult attendees, staff and volunteers, etc.);

(4) Who will be responsible for distributing questionnaires;

(5) Who will tabulate the data;

(6) How will the data be tabulated;

(7) Who will compose the written report incorporating the results;

(8) Who will receive the report;

(9) How will the report be used; and

(10) Will the results be worth the time and energy.

The questionnaire is the simplest method to use to collect participant reaction to specific library programs. Distributed to the audience immediately following the conclusion of the program, it can be completed on the spot when the activities are still fresh in the participant's mind. Remember to make pencils available to those who will be completing the questionnaire.

Design a questionnaire that is short and simple, and that will be applicable for more than one program, or, at least, one that can be used repeatedly with little revision. Alternative plans to gather data from pre-readers or those participants in the first few grades must be considered.

The decision to design, distribute, and analyze evaluation data is vital. Considering the time, energy, and skills required to complete the process successfully, you must be absolutely certain that the results will prove beneficial to your programming efforts. Avoid publicly collecting data and not using or publicizing the results.

IX

Publicity

Before you begin to publicize your summer programs, take stock of the publicity vehicles available to the library and identify the ones with the greatest impact on residents. Newspapers, commercial television and radio stations, community cable channels, newsletters of organizations, and city/county mailings are all potential sources of publicity for your summer events. Make publicity an essential element in your total library program.

The planning stage of the summer series of activities is the time to identify and schedule publicity techniques. Possibilities include:

(1) In-house publicity.

Post items announcing and explaining your summer programs throughout your library. Put dates, times, and rules on every item. In-house publicity items include:

- bulletin boards
- bookmarks
- posters
- brochures
- bibliographies
- flyers
- exhibits/displays
- showings of video tapes explaining programs
- mobiles

Make materials available at the circulations desk as well as other strategic spots throughout the library. Remember to post notices, etc., on doors, mirrors in restrooms, shelving end panels, and windows; and make use of the floor and ceiling as well. Every spot in your library is appropriate for use in communicating your programs/services to your public.

(2) Media coverage.

Use local newspapers and radio and television air waves to get the word out. Guidelines and samples are provided.

Guidelines for News Release:

- Use your own letterhead.
- Double or triple space.
- Type on only one side of the page.
- If your story is longer than one page, type "more" at the bottom and across the top of page two, type page number, subject, date, library's name, and name and telephone number of the contact person.
- On page one, include name, address, and telephone number of your library, and a name and telephone number of a contact person.
- Format the news-story by using the inverted pyramid style of writing.
- A good catchy lead is important.
- Be concise.
- Attach copy of program or agenda of the event.
- Make it local!
- Provide complete information.
- Do not editorialize.
- Type information carefully.
- Use short paragraphs.
- Photographs should be action shots and carefully labeled.
- Address news releases to a specific person.
- Be aware of deadlines and news release requirements of each newspaper.
- Always include Who, What, Where, When, and Why.

Guidelines for Public Service Announcements

- Be brief--10 to 60 seconds.
- Use short words and simple sentences.
- Vary the pace (alternate long and short sentences).
- Use action words.

- Use descriptive, colorful words.
- Avoid "tongue-twisters".
- Be lively and imaginative.
- Time your spots (a 10-second announcement is about 25 words; a 20-second announcement is about 50 words; a 60-second announcement is about 150 words).
- Double space typed announcements.
- Include name and telephone number of the library and contact person.
- Use general spots which can be aired throughout the summer--update occasionally.

Sample news releases and a public service announcement are provided at the end of this chapter.

(3) Communitywide coverage.

Include in your reading club program publicity campaign personal appearances of your staff/volunters to decribe programs and encourage participation in library activities. Encourage staff and volunteers to take every available opportunity to talk about the library and its reading programs. Announce library events at choir practice, girl scout meetings, garden club activities, and any other situation in which you and your staff/volunteers find yourselves. And remeber that adults often initiate reading club participation for the children in your community. A few additional suggestions of potential situations which announcements of library events can be made include:

- Classrooms of all local public and private schools with children who are potential reading club participants and program attendees;
- Day care centers (if you want to encourage the attendance of formalized groups of children);
- City/county staff meetings/activities;
- "In-service" days at area schools;
- Friends meetings/activities;
- Any meeting/activity of a local organization;
- Church groups of all kinds; and
- Library board meetings.

A structured publicity blitz is very effective if planned and implemented in a formalized manner. It will ensure that all organizations with potential participants will be contacted. Contacting local groups and offering to present a program outlining general library services with emphasis on summer activities will probably be well received by organizations attempting to provide programs for members.

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Garvey, Mona. Library Public Relations. New York: H.W. Wilson, 1980.

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Wallace, L. "Making An Impact." Unabashed Librarian 1984 (no. 52): 32. (Press release writing)

SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE

GENERAL INFORMATION

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Children at _____(Name of Library) _____ will encounter _____(Subject of Reading Club Theme) _____ in the Reading Club Program "(Theme Title)" beginning _____ (date) _____. Activities this year include_____ (General Activities List -- Programs, Films, etc.) _____. Pre-register by calling _____Library's Phone Number)__ There is no charge.

Summer hours at the library will be _____ (Library Hours) _____ beginning _____ (Date) _____.

Questions concerning this release should be directed to _____ (your name) _____, _____ (Telephone Number) _____. Thank you.

Begin on line 15 to allow newspeople to write printing instructions on the copy, and double space. Mail 10 days to 2 weeks before you wish to have it printed.

SAMPLE NEWS RELEASE

SPECIFIC PROGRAM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Children ages _____ to _____ are reminded of the ____ (story time, craft session, etc.) _____ to be held on _____ (date) _____ (time) _____, at _____ (library) _____ as part of the Reading Club Program "_____(Theme)"_____. Activities that day will include _____(names of films, stories, type of craft, etc.)_____. Pre-register by calling ___(telephone number)____. (Or Pre-registration is not necessary.)

Questions concerning this release should be directed to (Your name and telephone number and name of library). Thank you.

SAMPLE RADIO PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

"Theme Title" will be the theme of this summer's activities at ____(name of library)_____. Children ages ___ to ___ are invited to take part in _____(general activities)_____ beginning _____(date)_____. Call the library at _____(telephone number)_____ for more information.

Questions concerning this release should be directed to _____(your name)_____, _____(name of library)_____, _____(telephone number)_____. Thank you.

Appendix A

SAMPLE FORMS

Program

Name of Program _____

Presentor _____ Phone _____

Place _____

Date _____ Month _____ Day _____ Time _____

Materials/Supplies Needed: Ordered _____
Ready

Media Needed: Ordered _____

Ready _____

Equipment Needed: Ordered _____

Ready _____

Personnel Needed: Informed _____

Bibliography Ordered _____

Ready _____

COMMUNITY RESOURCE FILE

Areas of Specialty/Skills

Individuals

Name:

Address: Zip:

Telephone: (home)
(work)

Agreed to present program to library?

When can individual present program (Morning? Afternoon? Special time?)?

Require fee? How much?

Program requirements (Limited attendance? Equipment? Supplies? Age of audience?)?

Has this individual presented a program at the library in the past?
When?

Was she/he dependable?
enjoyable?
prompt?
received well?

COMMUNITY RESOURCE FILE

Organizations

Name of Organization:

Address of Organization: Zip:

Contact Person:

Address of Contact Person: Zip:

Area(s) of Specialty:

Provide programs?

Types of programs?

Audience level?

Charge fee? How much?

VOLUNTEER RECORD

Name:

Address: Zip:

Telephone: (home)
(work)

What special skills do you have?
- Typing?
- Word Processing?
- Storyhours?
- Bookkeeping?
- Book Mending?
- Foreign Language?
- Other?

Have you ever worked in a library as a staff member or volunteer?
- Yes or No?
- Doing What?

When would you like to work in the library?
- Days?
- Hours?
- Number of hours each week? Month?

What type of work would you like to do in the library?

Do you have any physical restrictions?
- If yes, please list:

*This form can be given to volunteers to complete.

PROGRAM COSTS

Individual Program

Presentor fee or gift

Rental fee

- Equipment
- Audiovisual hardware
- Audiovisual software
- Space
- Presentor requested item(s)

Supplies

- Arts and crafts items
- "goodies" to take home
- Plates, cups, napkins, etc. for refreshments

Refreshments

- Cookies, cupcakes, etc.
- Punch, soft drinks, etc.

Copyright fee(s)

Publicity

- In-house
- Communitywide

Additional staff

Stationery, stamps, etc.

Overhead costs (if program is held at a time when the library is not ordinarily open to the public, or fee is charged for using non-library space.)

Additional insurance

Miscellaneous _____

Subtotal

* Less Donations _____

TOTAL COST TO LIBRARY

*Place an asteric next to those costs which represent dodnations.

PROGRAM COSTS

Series Cost

Total Costs for Individual Programs

Program 1

Program 2

Program 3

Program 4

Program 5

Program 6

Program 7

Program 8

Additional staff for the summer

Visits to area schools to describe summer events

Additions to the library collection as a result of the programming effort

Production costs (include art work as well as printing)
posters
bookmarks
brochures
flyers

Stationery, stamps, etc.

_____

Subtotal

* Less Donations

_____

TOTAL COST OF SERIES TO LIBRARY

*Place an asteric next to those costs which represent donations.

Costs listed above represent only costs for the entire series of summer programs and not individual events.

TEXAS READING CLUB

Registration Form

Name:

Address: **Zip:**

Telephone: ( )

School (next year):

Grade (next year):

***Books read:** 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100 110

120 130 140 150 160 170 180 190 200

*Add this to the registration form if you decide to keep track of the number of books read by each participant on his/her registration form. Mark through the numbers as participant reports books read.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Specific Program

How did you hear about the program?

Newspaper?

Radio?

Television?

School visit?

Word of mouth?

What did you like about the program?

What did you not like about the program?

Will you come again to another summer program?

Give us some ideas of programs you would like the library to give?

*Remember that children will be answering these questions to make them simple and easy to answer.

Appendix B

CALENDAR

APPENDIX B

This appendix is designed to provide your reading club and summer programming planner with a month by month list of tasks to accomplish in preparation for your reading club programming effort. It is only meant to serve as a skeleton schedule. Space has been provided for your own additions.

FEBRUARY

- Design goals and objectives.
- Determine activities (strategies) for all objectives and identify dates for each.
- Determine length of program series (in weeks).
- List ideas for potential programs.
- Evaluate community resources in light of program ideas.
- Evaluate library resources in light of program ideas.
- Initiate community resource file and design procedures to keep it current.
- Contact area schools (public and private) to learn about procedures for school visitations.
- Investigate vehicles for program publicity.
- Identify site possibilities for programs and make inquiries regarding availability.
- Evaluate library collection of book and non-book materials and order new items immediately.

MARCH

- Draft rules/regulations for reading club participation.
- Outline publicity schedule.
- Design in-house procedures for handling reading club activities.
- Order additional office and library supplies necessary to support summer activities.
- Select from list of possible activities/programs, those which your library is able to sponsor.

- Identify costs for each program activity.
- Draft tentative schedule of programs.
- Select tentative dates for beginning and end of reading club and programs.
- Make preliminary investigation of presentor availability and costs for programs.
- Begin an informal publicity campaign in-house by mentioning theme to patrons, Friends, volunteers, library board members, and city/county staff and officials.
- Draft summer programming budget.
- Solicit items/money from individuals, businesses, and other organizations.
- Contact local cable company, radio and television stations, area newspapers, and organizations to learn of procedures for announcing summer events using their media.

APRIL

- Finalize dates of reading club and programs.
- Make news releases available to organizations for inclusion in their newsletters.
- Finalize dates for school visits.
- Design brochure detailing summer events at your library--include both reading club dates and activities and summer programs.
- Write script for school visits.
- Invite yourself to discuss summer programs at the library to area club/organization meetings.
- Encourage staff and volunteers to begin discussing dates, etc. with patrons.
- Design bulletin boards and exhibits to be used throughout the summer.
- Contact local cable, radio and television channels and invite yourself to make a guest appearance to discuss your summer library programming effort.
- Refine program budget.

- Finalize presentor agreements to present programs.
- Finalize site plans. Correspond with site sponsor.

MAY

- Print brochures.
- Place brochures in strategic locations throughout the library.
- Begin aggressive publicity campaign.
- Send program information to cable station to be included in community cable announcement service.
- Compose and mail presentor letters.
- Decorate library with posters, streamers, bulletin boards, etc. to announce reading club and programs.
- Make a list of photographable events and send to local newspapers.
- Compose and distribute PSA's to local radio and television stations.
- Review budget and alter if necessary.
- Design program evaluation form and duplicate.
- Meet with staff/volunteers to discuss summer programs.